



State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster
State Superintendent

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841
125 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53702
(608) 266-3390 **TDD** (608) 267-2427 **FAX** (608) 267-1052
Internet Address: www.dpi.state.wi.us

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT TUITION WAIVERS

TYPES OF TUITION WAIVERS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Under certain circumstances, state law permits your child to continue to attend school in a school district even after you move out of the school district.

The law covers three circumstances in which your child may, if certain requirements are met, continue to attend school district even you are no longer a resident:

1. When you move out of a school district during a school year and wish your child to finish that school year in the school district.
2. When you move out of a school district during a school year and wish your child to not only finish the current school year in the school district, but to continue to attend that school district in the future.
3. When your child has attained senior status while a resident of the school district and wishes to attend the district in her or his senior year (this is often referred to as “the senior rule”).

Each of these circumstances has its own set of statutory rules that must be followed exactly in order for the student to continue to attend school in the district.

1. When you move out of a school district during a school year and wish your child to finish that school year in the school district:

If you move out of a school district during a school year, your child must be permitted to finish that school year in the school district if both of the following are true:

- Your child was a resident of the school district on either the third Friday in September or the second Friday in January of the current school year; and
- Your child was enrolled in the school district for at least 20 school days during the current school year.

If you do not meet both of the above criteria your child *may* be permitted to finish that school year in the district if both of the following are true:

- Your child was a resident of the school on July 1 of the current school year; and
- Your child was enrolled in the school district as of July 1 of the school year.

In the latter case, whether to permit your child to finish the school year in the district is optional to the school district. There is no appeal if the school district denies your request.

If you receive this tuition waiver, all of the following provisions apply:

The nonresident school district (that is, the school district you are moving out of and want your child to continue to attend) is not required to provide any transportation outside the boundaries of the nonresident school district.

- If you moved *prior to the first Monday in February*, you must apply for open enrollment during the very next February application period after the move in order for your child to continue to attend the school district after the current school year.
 - If you moved *after the first Monday in February*, you must apply for a separate tuition waiver (described in the next section) in order for your child to continue to attend the school district after the current school year.
 - If anything affecting this tuition waiver changes or if you change your mind and decide to have your child attend school in your new resident school district you *must* notify both the nonresident and resident school districts immediately.
- 2. When you move out of a school district during a school year and wish your child to not only finish that current school year in the school district, but to continue to attend that school district in the future.**

If you move out of a school district after the first Monday in February (that is, too late to apply for open enrollment for the next school year), your child may continue to attend that school district for the next school year if all of the following are true:

- You were a resident of the school district on the second Friday in January; and
- You moved out of the school district after the first Monday in February; and
- Your child was continuously enrolled in the school district from the second Friday in January until the end of the school year; and
- You continue to be a Wisconsin resident.

If all of the above are true your child may continue to attend the school district in the next school year after you move out, with the following exception:

If your child receives special education, your resident school district may deny the tuition waiver if the school district determines that the cost of the special education and related services in your child's individualized education program impose an undue financial burden on the resident school district. If your resident district denies your child's tuition waiver due to an undue financial burden, you may appeal that denial to the Department of Public Instruction within 30 days after you receive the notice of denial. The Department of Public Instruction is required to uphold the school district's decision unless it finds that the decision was arbitrary or unreasonable.

If you receive this tuition waiver, all of the following provisions apply:

- This tuition waiver is only for one year. If you wish your child to continue to attend the district after that, you must apply for open enrollment the very next February after you move. If you do not apply for open enrollment, the only way that your child may continue to attend the nonresident school district is if you pay tuition.
- You must register your child in the resident school district, even though your child will not attend there. This is because the resident school district will be charged for your child's attendance in the nonresident school district and it must be able to raise revenue through state aids and property taxes in order to pay for your child's attendance.
- When you apply for open enrollment, you are subject to all of the rules and regulations of open enrollment. Your child will be entitled to preference as a continuing student, but this preference is not a guarantee. Students entitled to preference are sometimes denied open enrollment and you should be aware that this is a possibility.
- You are responsible for providing transportation (unless transportation is required by the student's IEP). Either the resident or nonresident school district *may* provide transportation, if they wish, but they are not required to do so. Further, if the nonresident school district chooses to provide transportation, state law prohibits the district from picking up or dropping off your child within the boundaries of your resident school district.
- If the student is eligible for free or reduced price meals under the federal school lunch program, you may apply to the Department of Public Instruction for reimbursement of transportation expenses. If you believe you are eligible for transportation reimbursement and wish to apply for it, please ask for form PI 9411 *Transportation Reimbursement Application* and submit it with your application for the tuition waiver. This reimbursement is

only available for the tuition waiver that allows your child to continue to attend the school year after the move. It is not available for either of the other two types of tuition waivers.

- If anything affecting this tuition waiver changes or if you change your mind and decide to have your child attend school in your new resident school district you *must* notify both the nonresident and resident school districts immediately.
- 3. When your child has attained senior status while a resident of the school district and wishes to attend the district in her or his senior year (this is often referred to as “the senior rule).**

There are two parts to the senior rule:

- The student must have attained senior status.

Senior status is decided by each school district. In some school districts, a student attains senior status upon completion of the junior year. In others, a student attains senior status when the student has earned a specified number of credits. If a school district does not have a policy or established practice for defining senior status, the assumption is that senior status is attained upon completion of the junior year.

- The student must have been a resident of the school district at the time of attaining senior status.

APPLYING FOR TUITION WAIVERS

You must submit your application for a tuition waiver to the nonresident school district (that is, the district you are moving out of and that you want your child to continue to attend).

If you are applying for a waiver for the senior rule, there is no specific form you need to fill out. You should contact the school district to find out what they need you to do.

If you are applying to continue a school year already begun or to attend an additional school year after a move, you must fill out Department of Public Instruction form PI-9419 and submit it to the nonresident school district as soon as possible after you move (preferably within about 2 weeks). If you wish to apply shortly before a move, you may do so, but you should not apply until you are certain that you will move.

PARENT-PAID TUITION

If you do not meet the eligibility requirements for any of the tuition waivers and did not meet the deadline to apply for open enrollment, your child may attend a nonresident school district on a parent-paid tuition basis provided that:

- There is space in the nonresident school district; and
- The nonresident school district agrees to accept your child on a tuition basis (it is not required to do so).

A new state law establishes a statewide tuition rate for parents that is based on the statewide average per student cost in certain areas (this is the same amount that a resident district pays for a child to open enroll). For the 2000-2001 school year, the parent-paid tuition is estimated to be \$4,858.

If you pay tuition, you may, of course, apply for open enrollment at the next February application period. Your child will be entitled to preference as a continuing student, but this preference is not a guarantee. Students entitled to preference are sometimes denied open enrollment and you should be aware that this is a possibility.

Mary Jo Cleaver, School Administration Consultant
Public School Open Enrollment
608-267-9101
maryjo.cleaver@dpi.state.wi.us
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